

Top Candidates for the Future Policy Award 2021 on Protection from Hazardous Chemicals announced

Policies from Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Ethiopia, India, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sweden, and the USA are shortlisted for the Oscar on Best Policies

Geneva, Hamburg, Nairobi, Paris, 27th May 2021 – The shortlist of the Future Policy Award 2021 was announced today. The award celebrates the most effective policy solutions that minimise the adverse effects of exposure to chemicals on human health and the environment. 12 Policies from 5 continents are the top candidates for the award.

In total, 55 policies from 36 countries were nominated. An international expert jury convened to deliberate on the top candidates. The annual award, often referred to as the Oscar on Best Policies, is the first and only award that celebrates policies for the benefit of present and future generations on an international level. The following policies have been shortlisted this year (per category):

Chemicals Across the Lifecycle

- **India, Rajasthan:** Policy on Pneumoconiosis including Silicosis Detection, Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation (2019)
- **Kyrgyzstan:** Resolution No. 43 on Approval of the Chemical Hazard Classification System and Hazard Information Requirements – Labelling and Safety Data Sheet (2015)
- **Republic of Korea:** Consumer Chemical Products and Biocides Safety Act (2018)
- **Sweden, Stockholm County Council:** Phase-Out List for Chemicals Hazardous to the Environment and Human Health (2012-2016, revised for 2017-2021)
- **USA, Massachusetts:** Toxics Use Reduction Act (TURA, 1989, amended 2006)

Highly Hazardous Pesticides

- **Cuba:** Programme for Agroecological Pest Management (MAP, 1993) and National Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (Plan SAN, 2020)
- **Denmark:** Action Plans on Pesticides (PAP, 2013-2021) and Organic Action Plans to Promote Organic Production in Denmark (OAP, 2011-2020)
- **Sri Lanka:** Control of Pesticides Act No. 33 (1980, amended in 1994, 2011, 2020) and

National Policy and Action Plan on Prevention of Suicide (1997)

Lead in Paint

- **Ethiopia:** Lead in Paint Control Regulation No. 429 (2018)
- **Philippines:** Chemical Control Order for Lead and Lead Compounds (CCO, 2013-24)

Environmentally Persistent Pharmaceutical Pollutants

- **Colombia:** Resolution 371 Establishing the Elements to be considered in the Management Plans for the Return of Pharmaceutical Products and Expired Medicines (2009)
- **The Netherlands:** Chain Approach to Pharmaceutical Residues in Water Implementation Programme (2018-2022).

In early July 2021, the winners will be announced. On 6th July 2021, we will **celebrate the winning policies of the Future Policy Award 2021 with a high-level, virtual Award Ceremony.**

The prize is awarded by the World Future Council and is organised this year in partnership with the United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP), the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)future-policy-award-2021-about-the-shortlisted-policies, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The World Health Organization estimated the burden of disease from exposure to selected chemicals at 1.6 million lives in 2016.[\[1\]](#) There is growing concern about the long-term health effects of exposure to harmful chemicals and waste, which include various forms of cancer, reproductive disorders, learning disabilities, and other adverse health impacts.[\[2\]](#) Costs from neurobehavioural deficits caused by exposure to certain chemicals is estimated to be more than USD 170 billion per year in the European Union alone.[\[3\]](#)

Estimates are that there are over 140,000 human-made chemicals in the world.[\[4\]](#) Though many of these chemicals are in commerce, many of them have never been properly tested for safety. Particularly problematic are chemicals that end up in our environment – in water bodies, soil or air, in the food chain or in drinking water – or that accumulate in our bodies or other organisms. Hazardous chemicals, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), phthalates, heavy metals such as lead, pesticides, and environmentally persistent pharmaceutical pollutants, can cause irreversible harm to the health of humans, fauna, flora, and ecosystems.

“The unsound management of chemicals and waste comes with an enormous economic price tag. Urgent regulatory action is needed to save taxpayers’ money and safeguard health and critical environmental resources, especially as the chemical industry is expected to grow”, says **Masamichi Kono, Deputy Secretary General of the OECD.** “We need ambitious and impactful policies, such as the ones shortlisted for the Future Policy Award 2021, to stop the adverse impact on health and the environment and to move towards sustainable chemistry.”

“Hazardous chemicals are a complex challenge”, **Nikhil Seth, UN Assistant Secretary General, and Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)** points out. “Their management is a cross-cutting issue of the Agenda 2030. Chemical safety and the management of toxic chemicals touches many, if not all, of the Sustainable Development Goals. I truly applaud the shortlisted policies of the Future Policy Award 2021 for translating this critical issue into concrete action.“

It is also important to consider hazardous chemical exposures in the working environment. Workers tend to be exposed to higher doses of chemicals, and over longer periods, increasing their

risk of significant health effects. Good policies in the world of work are needed, and the 2021 Future Policy Award highlights examples of how we can continue to promote occupational safety and health and the sound management of chemicals and waste worldwide.

Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) notes that “It is our duty to reaffirm the right to a safe and healthy working environment for all working people.”

“Every day our rights are violated by the exposure to toxic chemicals and pollution. Especially children are disproportionately affected”, remarks **Alexandra Wandel, Executive Director of the World Future Council**. “For the sake of current and future generations, it is absolutely critical that stakeholders make the protection from hazardous chemicals a priority. We are very much looking forward to bring effective policies in this field to a world stage.”

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Note to Editors

About the Future Policy Award

Every year, the most impactful policies tackling humankind’s most pressing challenges are celebrated through the [Future Policy Award](#), the first and only award that recognizes policies for the benefit of present and future generations on an international level. The aim of the Award is to raise global awareness for exemplary policies and speed up policy action. The World Future Council has awarded this annual prize since 2010 in partnership with UN agencies and the IPU.

About the shortlisted policies for the Future Policy Award 2021

www.worldfuturecouncil.org/chemicals

www.worldfuturecouncil.org/future-policy-award-2021-about-the-shortlisted-policies

About the World Future Council

The World Future Council (WFC) works to pass on a healthy and sustainable planet with just and peaceful societies to our children and grandchildren. To achieve this, we focus on identifying, developing, highlighting, and spreading effective, future-just solutions for current challenges

humanity is facing, and promote their implementation worldwide. The Council consists of 50 eminent global change-makers from governments, parliaments, civil societies, academia, the arts, and the business world. Jakob von Uexkull, the Founder of the Alternative Nobel Prize, launched the World Future Council in 2007. We are an independent, non-profit organisation under German law and finance our activities with institutional partnerships and donations.

Partners

About the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) & the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)

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About the OECD

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Footnotes

[1] WHO (2016). Public health impact of chemicals: knowns and unknowns. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-FWC-PHE-EPE-16.01-eng>.

[2] WHO. Providing information on the health effect of chemicals. <https://www.who.int/activities/providing-information-on-the-health-effects-of-chemicals>.

[3] UNEP (2019). Global Chemicals Outlook II Summary for Policymakers: From Legacies to Innovative Solutions-Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/global-chemicals-outlook-ii-legacies-innovative-solutions>.

[4] Landrigan, P.J. & Fuller, R. (2018). The Impact of Pollution on Planetary Health: Emergence of an Underappreciated Risk Factor. UNEP: Perspectives; Issue No. 29.

https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/22416/Perspective_No_29_web.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.